

Make Room!!!! by lenaismad

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Summary:

In which Neil Hargrove dies and Billy takes Steve on a road trip instead of attending the funeral.

Make Room!!!!

Author's Note:

Based on Make Room!!!! by My Chemical Romance.

I seem to be unable to write anything without it becoming angsty. I'm the fucking mistress of angst. Please don't hurt me.

Steve frowned as the car passed the jolly looking "Now leaving Hawkins, Indiana. Come again!" sign. He tugged at the knot to loosen up the tie that was on its merry way to slowly strangle him. "Don't we have a funeral to attend?" he asked as he tried to twist his body in peculiar angles to make enough room for his arms to slip out of the immensely uncomfortable suit that could have been a size or two larger.

Billy scoffed, eyes flickering from the road to Steve. "Hell no," he said, reaching out to help Steve stuff himself out of the stubbornly clinging fabric.

"It's your father, you know. Maybe you should at least show up," Steve suggested casually, acting as if it were a much smaller deal than it actually was. He was more than aware how touchy this topic was – one misstep and Billy would explode, so Steve did his best to tiptoe around the topic of his father's death (and his father in general, really).

"And spit into his grave," Billy mumbled. It was quite obvious that he didn't give two flying shits. He didn't even bother to dress up for the occasion which Steve had pointed out – not that he'd received much more than a half-intelligible grumble in response. Although now, knowing that Billy had probably never intended to actually make an appearance at the cemetery, he saw the whole situation in an entirely new light.

Neil Hargrove had been a lot of things – a monstrous parental figure, bad influence, the cause of most of Billy's suffering, overall shitty human being, and Steve most certainly did feel a strong desire to

deliver a fairly hard kick into his crotch area and worse, but the guy was dead now, so Steve was ready to close the coffin, bury him ten feet under and never speak of the fucker again. However, Billy seemed to have chosen a different approach – he seemed to have skipped the whole funeral ordeal and gotten to the forgetting-the-man's-ever-existed part right away. And who was Steve to tell Billy how to deal with the loss of his father? Whatever Billy was going through, it wasn't grief. Indifference, gratification perhaps, definitely a tremendous amount of relief, but not grief. Sadness or sorrow didn't seem to make it to the party – Steve supposed the old fool had brought it onto himself.

"Care to share where we are going?" Steve asked, because even though he did put all of his trust into Billy, he still would've liked to know where he was spending his weekend.

Billy smiled with a hint of mischief in the curve of his lips. "Road trip, baby!" he hooted, holding his fist out of the open window, the wind blowing strands of his unruly hair into his face.

Steve shook his head, bowing it a little to conceal the smile that was trying to claw its way onto his face. "You could've told me. I would've worn something more... road trip appropriate."

"I have spare clothes in the back," Billy pointed his thumb to a lone duffle bag lying on the backseat. Steve's smile grew wider at the prospect of not having to spend the weekend in a button down and dress pants.

"So what's the plan, captain?" Steve asked, reaching for the bag and pulling it onto his lap. The zipper was stuck and he had to put up a ridiculous amount of effort to tug it open.

"First, we are getting breakfast, I'm starving. Then I wanna show you one kinda special place. And then we are finding a half-decent motel to spend the night." Billy said, pulling a cigarette ostensibly out of thin air and setting it in between his teeth.

"Did you wake up with an urge to get out of town or have you been a sneaky bitch, planning this behind my back?" Steve asked, postponing the thorough investigation of the duffle bag and searching his pockets

for a lighter instead.

Billy shrugged, watching every single movement of Steve's hands as he brought the flickering flame up his lips. "A little bit of both, I guess. I wanted to take you out during the summer. Then the old bastard died and I figured I'm free to do whatever I want now, so I packed a bag, raided his wallet and here we are."

Steve opened his mouth to voice a question that had been prodding at the back of this mind ever since he'd heard the news but the car came to a sudden halt. The Camaro was parked on a tiny parking lot in front of an even smaller dinner.

"Grab the clothes. You need to get changed," said Billy before hopping out of the car and prowling his way towards the door, not bothering to lock the car, or wait for Steve for that matter.

The place wasn't half bad for a barely surviving restaurant in the middle of nowhere. Lil' Bettie's read the blinking neon sign. Only one of the tables was occupied by a group of bulky biker guys who looked up from their overflowing plates of eggs, bacon and waffles to give them a curious once-over. Admittedly, they must have been a sight – Billy, with his arrogant demeanor and a cigarette hanging from his provocative smirk, and Steve, who looked like he was dressed up for church, clutching a duffle bag and trotting after him. Steve prayed the men wouldn't start any trouble – Billy, even though he was desperately holding onto a façade of utter calm, had a storm raging inside of him and if one of the men blinked the wrong way there would be punches flying. Steve really didn't feel like playing the moderator for Billy's mindless brawls again.

Steve caught Billy's forearm and pulled him into one of the booths. "I'm going to get changed. Don't you dare pick a fight while I'm gone."

Billy only smiled in response. He wasn't one for promises he wasn't sure he could keep. Steve sighed, letting go of Billy's arm, leaving a ghost of a touch on his fingertips.

He walked into the bathroom and locked himself in one of the stalls. He unbuttoned the shirt, exchanging it for one of Billy's tight gray tees. He pulled out a pair of loosely fitting jeans that fell dangerously

low on his hips once they were on, not that he minded. He stuffed the funeral clothes back into the bag and fought the zipper back close.

For a moment he sat down on the closed toilet seat, killing time by deciphering the mess of names and numbers and profanities scrawled on walls of the cubicle. He put his head into his hands, violently rubbing at his eyes. He weighed his options – he needed to talk to Billy. He needed answers and he needed to make sure that he was truly alright, that it wasn't just a mask he put on so Steve wouldn't worry. He had been doing that a lot lately – the pretense halfhearted sometimes, but mostly it was completely bulletproof. Steve sighed, unlocking the door and walking towards the sinks. He let the ice-cold water run over his hands absentmindedly, only snapping out of it and pulling away once his fingers started turning blue.

When he walked back out with new-gained composure, Billy was, to his relief, still seated where he had left him. He grinned a little when he saw Steve emerge from the door, gesturing to the wide variety of breakfast meals laid out on the table, "I didn't know what you wanted so I bought most of the menu."

Steve smiled, dropping into the seat opposite Billy. "The bill is going to be ginormous," he pointed out, grabbing a fork and stuffing a mouthful of scrambled eggs into his mouth.

"Don't worry about it. You are not the one paying for the bill anyway," Billy waved his hand, dismissing Steve's remark.

Steve frowned – he would have been more than happy to pay for the food. In fact, Steve's excessive pocket money paid for their whims more often than not. He wasn't sure what this was to Billy – the last revenge on his deceased father in the form of wasting his money? Or was it really just as innocent as it seemed and Steve was once again only overthinking everything?

"Billy..." Steve started, instantly focusing all of Billy's attention solely onto himself (because that's how it was – just a word from Steve and Billy would do anything, unlikely as it sounded). He swallowed thickly, "are you staying in Hawkins?"

"What kind of question is that?" Billy asked, narrowing his eyes. It

wasn't exactly an answer though. It didn't soothe Steve's nerves, it didn't make his heartbeat slow down, it didn't help ease up the pounding in his temples.

"Your father is gone. There's nothing holding you there anymore."

"What about you?"

"Am I enough to make you stay?"

"You have been enough to make me stay this far, what makes you think his death changes anything? Wouldn't you stay if you were in my shoes?"

"Of course I would, but... "

"So?"

"I... yeah, you are right." Steve looked down at the food, picking up a coffee mug and gulping down entirety of the hot liquid. He let the scorching pain distract him from Billy's piercing stare.

"Look, Steve, I know you are concerned about my wellbeing and all that shit, but you have to stop acting like my mother. I'm fine." Billy leaned back, crossing his arms defensively over his chest, waiting for Steve to challenge him. The stress he put on the last word thickening the air.

"I'm sorry," Steve mumbled.

"You always are," Billy let out a breath, allowing a sliver of remorse to slither its way into his ice-cold expression.

They finished their food without uttering another word, only the sound of silverware clashing and the jukebox playing a notorious tune broke through the heavy silence.

Billy paid the bill, not even letting Steve take a glimpse at the total. They walked back to the car, slowly, unhurriedly as if they were dreading the moment when they would be stuck in the dismal quiet once more.

"I'm sorry, okay?" Billy said once they were buckled up, making Steve's gaze snap away from the window. "I know I'm not the easiest person to deal with. Hell, I don't even know how you are still here. If I had to deal with my issues all the time, I would have bolted a long time ago. And all the shit I've done to you? Fuck, I would have never forgiven me." Steve opened his mouth to protest but was silenced by Billy holding up his hand before he could let out a sound. "Look, you are probably the only person I have left in this whole damn world and like it or not, you are stuck with me unless you decide that you've had enough of my bullshit and make a run for it because, trust me, I would understand. Oh and Steve, don't think I don't trust you enough to open up or something, I just don't want to be more of a burden than I already am."

"You are not a burden," was all Steve managed to say.

Billy smiled, his lips pink and pretty and kissable. "Stop lying to yourself Steve."

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Steve had his eyes closed when the car eased into another halt. He blinked the initial blurriness away with a lazy flutter of eyelashes.

Billy patted his leg before getting out of the car, "Wakey wakey, sleeping beauty."

Steve groaned groggily before opening the door and ungracefully tumbling out of the vehicle. He allowed himself a moment to admire their surroundings – magnificent trees towering over their heads, barely visible patches of blue sky through the thick branches, tall blades of grass swaying in the cool breeze, and Billy leading him deeper and deeper into the forest until the dirt path opened up into a clearing.

Billy gave him a sideways look, his eyes sparkling with genuine excitement. Steve raised a skeptical eyebrow, leaning sideways to see what Billy was hiding. The confusion only multiplied when he was faced with a number of targets, dozens upon dozens of beer cans set up on cleanly cut tree stumps and a sea of bullets littering the grass. A prominent smell of gun powder filled his nose, mouth, lungs.

"What..." Before Steve could finish the question, Billy was twirling a gun in his hand. Steve froze. "Where the hell did you get that from?"

"It used to be my fathers." Steve took note of the careful usage of past tense in the formulation of the sentence. "Now that the fucker is dead, it's technically mine." He pointed the barrel at one of the targets and fired. The earsplitting sound echoed throughout the forest, it resonated in Steve's ears.

Billy with a gun was a dangerous sight. It didn't scare Steve as much as it made tremendous worry rise up in his chest, squeezing until there was no air left in his lungs. With the boxed up anger, the broken pieces cutting away at his insides, the crumbling mask of indifference, Billy was a loaded gun himself, and giving him a trigger to pull was like baiting a hungry lion with fresh meat. It wasn't even that Steve didn't trust Billy – hell, he'd gladly give his life into Billy's hands and would still sleep soundly at night. He just didn't trust Billy around other people. He was violent in nature – a gift from his abusive father, Steve supposed, and having a gun? God, Steve didn't want to end up looking up visiting hours for prisons. Billy was self-destructive, that's just the way he was wired. He relished in pain and mayhem. Steve didn't know how to help him – simply holding him together didn't feel like enough anymore.

The bullet collided with the target, missing the bull's eye by mere inches. "My grandpa used to take me shooting when I was younger. He used to live a few miles north from here. He set up the shooting range with his friends when he was my age, hell the man was a legend. Taught me how to use a gun," Billy said, reloading the handgun and holding it out to Steve. "Wanna try?"

Steve hesitated. It wasn't like he'd never held a gun. He had pulled a trigger before. But doing it recreationally? No. He never thought much pleasure could come out of shooting at things for shits and giggles. But Billy brought him here with the sole purpose of let out some steam and he needed Steve to be a part of it. Steve knew him well enough to be able to read in between the lines. Billy needed a rock, he needed to feel like he wasn't a freak, he needed someone to share moments like this with him. Billy needed to be understood and not judged for every breath he took. Steve was willing to do that for him, had been doing that for him for months, so he took the gun out

of his hand, aimed and fired.

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Steve's face was faintly illuminated by the soft light of the vacancy sign seeping in through the gap in the curtains, giving his skin a bluish tinge. The room was otherwise dark. The lights were off, allowing the night to take hold of the tiny space.

The bed was hard, the sheets were thin, the floor was cold under his feet as he sat down on the edge on the mattress. Billy was curled up on the other side, facing him. His face was casted in shadows – Steve could barely make out the curve of his jaw, the slope of his neck.

"Billy..." Steve whispered, "you don't have to pretend anymore."

Billy's eyes snapped open, "I'm not pretending. Did you think his death would break my tiny shriveled up heart? That I'd cry because an asshole who'd been making my life a living hell throughout my whole sorry existence, who'd made me into this fucked up mess, who'd scraped at me until there was nothing left, died? Well, you thought wrong, Steve. You fucking thought wrong."

Steve shook his head, not willing to admit defeat just yet. "I don't mean it like that. You don't have to pretend you don't give a shit about anything. You don't have to pretend that you are this tough guy with a heart of stone. You don't have to pretend to be an asshole just to survive anymore. He's gone. You can let down the guard." He lied down on the bed, reaching out to run a hand down Billy's cheek.

Billy leaned into the touch, letting the warmth of Steve's skin seep into his own. "That's the scary thing. I have become every single bad thing you can think of. I cannot stop being what I am, Steve. You have your hopes high, but you can't just waltz in, snap your fingers and erase all those years of bullshit. I'm sorry but that's not how life works."

Steve's hand wandered down Billy's neck, over his shoulder, his bicep, until he was gripping his hand. "You are going to be just fine."

Billy laughed bitterly, "You are naïve if you truly think so." He curled

his fingers around Steve's so tightly he nearly cut off the circulation. "Just give up on me already."

Steve met Billy's eyes in the darkness. Maintaining eye contact, he squeezed Billy's hand, tightening his grip until Billy hissed. "You'll have to wait hella long for that to happen."

Billy grinned, "Masochistic brat."

Steve pulled him close, "Idiotic asshole."